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## CHAPTER 2

# BATTLE COMMAND

*Battle command is the exercise of command in operations against a hostile, thinking enemy. It is employed to link the leadership element of combat power to operations. Battle command principally is an art that employs skills developed by professional study, constant practice, and considered judgment. Commanders, assisted by staff, visualize the operation, describe it in terms of intent and guidance, and direct the actions of subordinates within their intent. They direct operations in terms of the battlefield operating systems and directly influence operations by their physical presence supported by their command and control system. Command of the SBCT remains a personal function. The capabilities provided via the information systems infrastructure provide the commander with an ability to lead and make decisions from anywhere on the battlefield while remaining closely tied to planning and preparation ongoing in the main command post.*

### Section I. THE ART OF COMMAND

Command is the authority that a commander lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank and assignment. Leaders possessing command authority strive to use it with firmness, care, and skill. Command is more an art than a science, although it exhibits characteristics of both. The "art of command" requires expert performance of a specific skill using intuitive faculties that cannot be gained solely by study or education. Command also requires a conscious and skillful exercise of authority to fulfill command responsibilities through decision-making and leadership.

#### 2-1. ROLE OF THE COMMANDER

The SBCT commander's knowledge, experience, and personality determine how he interacts with his unit through command and control. The commander decides what he needs to do and the best method to do it. He leads his unit through the process in mission accomplishment. He drives the process through mission command. He establishes a command climate for his unit, prepares it for operations, commands it during operations, and assesses his subordinates. The commander refines the SBCT's command and control system and operates it based upon his personality. Within the limitations of current C2 systems architecture, he establishes a system to meet the unique demands that he places on it, the abilities and personalities of his subordinates, and the capabilities of the equipment in the SBCT.

#### 2-2. MISSION COMMAND

Mission command is the conduct of military operations through decentralized execution based on mission orders for effective mission accomplishment. Mission orders leave the "how" of mission accomplishment to the subordinates by allowing them maximum freedom of planning and action to accomplish missions. Successful mission command results from subordinate leaders exercising disciplined initiative to accomplish missions within the commander's intent. Mission command requires an environment of trust and

mutual understanding. The four elements of mission command are commander's intent, subordinate initiative, mission orders, and resource allocation.

a. **Commander's Intent.** Commander's intent is a clear, concise statement of what key tasks the unit must do and what conditions the unit must meet to succeed with respect to the enemy, terrain, and to the desired end state. The commander formulates and communicates his intent to ensure unity of effort during operations, allowing subordinates to exercise disciplined initiative.

b. **Subordinate Initiative.** Initiative is the assumption of responsibility to decide and initiate independent actions when the commander's concept or order is no longer applicable or when an unanticipated opportunity leading to the accomplishment of the commander's intent presents itself. Subordinates decide how to achieve their assigned missions within the delegated freedom of action and the exercise of disciplined initiative during execution; however, they have an absolute responsibility to fulfill the commander's intent.

c. **Mission Orders.** A mission order is a technique for completing combat orders to allow subordinates maximum freedom of planning and action to accomplish missions that leave the "how" of mission accomplishment to the subordinate. The commander intervenes to direct coordination, restore operations, or exploit success. At a minimum, mission orders state--

- Task organization.
- Commander's intent and concept of operations.
- Unit mission.
- Subordinate unit missions.
- Mission essential coordinating instructions.

d. **Resource Allocation.** The commander allocates appropriate resources to subordinates to enable them to accomplish their missions. The commander also must consider information (or the C2 INFOSYS infrastructure) as a resource and share it through all levels of his command.

## **2-3. LOCATION OF THE COMMANDER**

Previously, the commander was torn between the conflicting requirement to visualize the battlefield and the requirement for his physical presence in the main or tactical command post to participate in the MDMP. This dilemma slowed the planning and execution of operations while frustrating the commander's efforts to "get out of the command post."

a. All commanders within the SBCT have the ability to visualize their battlespace in all dimensions and to share a COP. They also have the ability to precisely locate and track high payoff targets and conduct simultaneous operations employing lethal and non-lethal means while operating with joint and multinational forces. In addition, SBCT commanders retain the ability to recognize and protect their own and other friendly forces. The commander cannot, however, fully visualize the battlefield while directing and synchronizing the efforts of his SBCT from only a computer screen at a CP. He must move from the command post to assess the situation face-to-face with subordinate commanders and their soldiers. The INFOSYS within the SBCT permit a commander to position himself where he can best command without depriving himself of the ability to respond to opportunities and changing circumstances.

b. The commander can be virtually anywhere on the battlefield to best affect ongoing operations without disrupting the planning and preparation for future operations. Near real-time information updates, continuous assessment, and command decisions can be briefed, approved, and disseminated from SBCT to company level via the command and control infrastructure.

## **2-4. COMBINING THE ART OF COMMAND AND THE SCIENCE OF CONTROL**

The commander is the key to command and control in the SBCT. Foremost among his roles is his ability to combine the art of command and the science of control. He must use a methodology of visualizing the battlespace, describing his visualization to subordinates, directing action to achieve results, and leading the unit to mission accomplishment, while continually assessing the situation.

a. **Visualize.** The commander's visualization is the core mental process that supports his decision-making and is the key by which the commander combines the art of command and the science of control. It is the process of achieving a clear understanding of the SBCT's current state with relation to the enemy and the environment, developing a desired end state which represents mission accomplishment, and determining the sequence of activities that moves the SBCT from its current state to the end state. The commander begins to visualize the desired end state when he receives a mission or perceives a change in the mission. He applies his current situational understanding to the received or perceived mission. As he analyzes or receives staff analysis of the mission, he develops a mental image of the friendly forces in relation to the enemy, the environment, and possible future operations at the conclusion of the operation, or the end state. The commander's visualization is his assessment tool throughout the operation, and he should focus on three main factors.

(1) ***Understand the Current State of Friendly and Enemy Forces.*** This is situational understanding (SU), which the commander derives from applying his judgment, experience, expertise, and intuition to the information provided to him by the staff in the form of the COP. This SU includes physical factors, human factors, and the relationships between friendly and enemy forces and the environment that represent potential opportunities or threats for the SBCT.

(2) ***Foresee a Feasible Outcome.*** The commander must identify a feasible outcome to the operation that results in mission success and leaves the SBCT postured for the next operation.

(3) ***Visualize the Dynamics Between Opposing Forces.*** The commander must identify the dynamics throughout the sequence of actions. This includes evaluating possible enemy reactions and friendly counteractions. This evaluation may lead to the identification of possible decision points throughout the operation.

b. **Describe.** The commander describes his visualization by participating in the MDMP during planning and preparing for an operation and during execution. Specifically, his commander's intent, planning guidance, anticipated decision point(s), and his CCIR all serve to guide and to focus the command and control system to support his decision-making and communicate his decision for execution. The command and control system infrastructure is available to assist the commander in describing his visualization. However, he should not accept the products of the system unquestioned. He

must apply his judgment, experience, expertise, and intuition before making a decision and describing that decision to subordinates. During preparation, the commander uses the rehearsal to further describe his intent and concept to his subordinates, to identify and discuss options at decision points, to synchronize activities within the SBCT and among subordinate units, and add to his own visualization. During execution, the commander continues to visualize the implication of events, and he describes his conclusions to his staff and subordinates through updated CCIR and guidance.

c. **Direct.** The commander directs when he has made a decision and communicates that decision to his subordinates through an order.

(1) **Plan.** Orders should enable subordinates to understand their situation, their commander's mission and intent, and their own mission. The order (WARNO or OPORD) should provide unity of effort in exercising disciplined initiative by subordinate commanders. Clear direction is essential to mission success; however, commanders must strike a balance between *necessary, but minimum direction* and *overly detailed direction*. The commander (or the staff) assigns graphical, written, or procedural control measures (permissive or restrictive) to prevent units from impeding one another and to impose necessary coordination. The commander should impose only the minimum control measures necessary to provide essential coordination and deconfliction among units.

(2) **Prepare.** During preparations, the commander must update and validate his visualization as the results of reconnaissance and surveillance operations become available. He must determine whether new information (on enemy forces, friendly forces, or the environment) invalidates his plan, requires him to adjust the plan, or validates the plan with no further changes. The earlier the commander identifies the need for modifications, the easier it is for him to incorporate and synchronize changes into his plan. He describes the implications of his visualization and directs actions to effect his changes to the plan through an order (WARNO, OPORD, or FRAGO).

(3) **Execute.** Execution includes a continuous process of assessing the current state of the operation and making adjustments to exploit opportunities and to account for unforeseen enemy actions. Combining the art of command and the science of control is most evident during execution. The commander exercises judgment and initiative continuously, assessing the situation and making decisions, often with incomplete, conflicting, and vague information. Waiting for perfect information is rarely an option. During execution, the commander uses his visualization, continuously updated with a current COP, to ensure that subordinate units execute appropriate measures for the actual situation. A major part of the "art of command" is to know when the plan must change, what criteria point toward a need for changes, and then determining what required changes will get the maximum effectiveness from the unit. The commander directs these actions primarily through a FRAGO.

## **Section II. COMMAND AND CONTROL**

Command and control consists of two components: the commander and the command and control system. The commander uses the command and control system to exercise C2 over forces to accomplish a mission.

## 2-5. THE COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM

The command and control system is the arrangement of personnel, information management, procedures, and equipment and facilities essential to the commander to plan, prepare for, execute, and assess operations.

a. **Personnel.** The command and control system in an SBCT begins with people. No amount of technology can reduce the importance of the human dimension since combat involves soldiers.

b. **Information Management.** Information management (IM) consists of the C2 INFOSYS and relevant information (RI). The C2 INFOSYS provide the commander with a vehicle for exercising command and control. These systems provide an accuracy and reliability that can accelerate decision-making within the SBCT. The C2 INFOSYS also make mission execution efficient and effective, allowing the commanders and staffs to spend more time and energy on the art and human dimension of command and control.

c. **Procedures.** Procedures are standard and detailed sequences of activities within the SBCT to accomplish tasks. They govern actions within the command and control system to effectively and efficiently exercise command and control. Adhering to procedures minimizes confusion, misunderstanding, and hesitance as commanders rapidly shift forces to meet contingencies.

d. **Equipment and Facilities.** The equipment and facilities provide sustainment and a work environment for the other elements of the command and control systems.

## 2-6. COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE

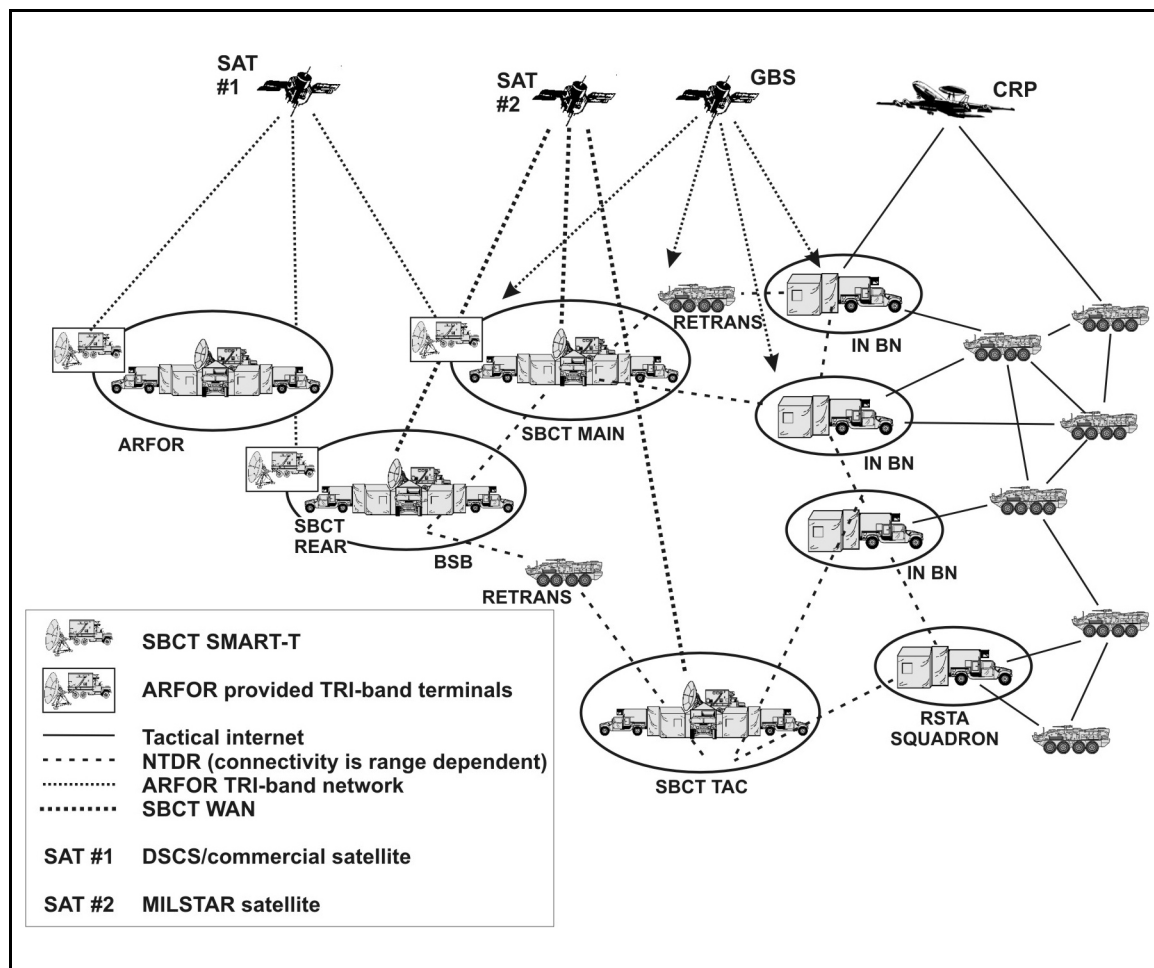
Command and control infrastructure is a system of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance doctrine, procedures, organizational structures, personnel, equipment, facilities, and communications and computers. It is designed to collect, process, store, display, and disseminate the information needed to develop a common operating picture in support of a commander's mission, and it supports a commander's exercise of command and control across the range of military operations through regulation of forces and functions IAW the commander's intent.

a. The command and control infrastructure (Figure 2-1, page 2-6) provides the commander and staff with the ability to plan, prepare, and execute using resilient voice and data communications networks (a portion of the INFOSYS) to enable effective command and control on the battlefield. This capability includes the conduct of operations from alert through redeployment. It also includes conduct of counterintelligence operations to deny the adversary's ability to do the same. The SBCT integrates the command and control infrastructure through maneuver, fires and effects, logistics, force protection, information operations, and intelligence.

b. The SBCT's command and control infrastructure is organized to leverage fully the opportunities presented by near real-time access to all RI and a near-complete COP through the available INFOSYS. The command and control organization provides all commanders within the SBCT with the capability to "see" and understand their AO in all its dimensions. It provides a shared COP of the situation, precisely locates and tracks critical targets, synchronizes simultaneous operations with lethal and nonlethal means, operates with joint and multinational forces, and recognizes and protects its own forces. This capability allows significantly enhanced synchronization of widely dispersed, highly mobile forces in execution as well as in planning to mass effects. The SBCT's INFOSYS

employ “smart technology” to enable organizations to identify and adapt to the changing patterns of a nondoctrinal or difficult-to-template enemy.





**Figure 2-1. Command and control system infrastructure.**

## 2-7. EXERCISING COMMAND AND CONTROL

The SBCT commander must place the command and control system into action to exercise command and control. Exercising command and control is dynamic throughout the operations process.

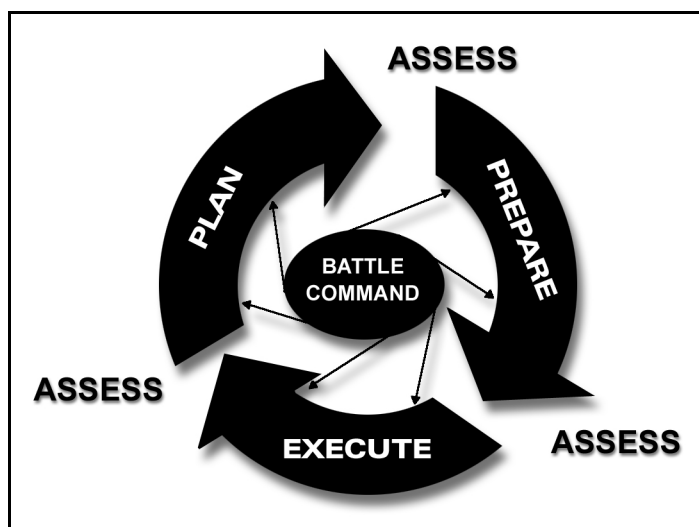
a. Although planning, preparing, executing, and assessing occur continuously in operations, they need not occur sequentially. The SBCT must prepare to perform all four actions simultaneously, with the commander at the center of the process (Figure 2-2).

b. The operations process is execution-focused rather than planning focused. The command and control INFOSYS compress planning to allow more time to focus on execution. The INFOSYS do this in two ways.

(1) The INFOSYS allow better collaborative and parallel planning among echelons within the SBCT.

(2) The INFOSYS provide a more accurate COP, allowing forces to execute faster with less detailed planning.





**Figure 2-2. The operations process.**

## **2-8. DISTRIBUTION OF SBCT COMMAND AND CONTROL**

The SBCT's staff sections normally are distributed among four command and control organizations: the command group and or TAC CP, main command post, and rear command post. The SBCT commander organizes the staff within each command post to perform essential staff functions to aid him with planning and in controlling operations. Enhanced command post capabilities allow the commander to maintain CP functionality regardless of the spatial positioning of the staff. The modularized design of each function (for example, plans, effects, maneuver support) provides the commander with the flexibility to tailor his command posts based on his assessment of the current and future situation. These command and control organizations are normally positioned within the SBCT's AO to maintain flexibility, redundancy, survivability, and mobility.

a. **Command Group.** The command group exists primarily as a portion of the TAC CP. While the commander can separate his command vehicle (CV) from the TAC CP and maintain a minimum of connectivity to the SBCT's INFOSYS, his ability to maintain a comprehensive flow of information from the staff and subordinates is limited. The command group normally lacks the ability to sustain itself beyond 12 hours and its security must also be considered. The command group, deployed with the TAC CP in its entirety, provides the commander with full INFOSYS capability and increased sustainability and security. The command group normally consists of the commander and other key staff officers as directed by the commander. Its purpose is the direct command and control of the SBCT. The command group is not a permanent organization; rather, it is formed anytime the SBCT commander goes forward to control an operation. The command group is equipped to operate separate from the TAC CP wherever the SBCT commander feels it is necessary to influence operations with rapid decisions and orders. The commander determines the actual placement of personnel within the command group.

(1) The commander fights the battle from the command group and normally locates near the most critical event, normally with the main effort headquarters. From this forward location, the commander is better able to observe critical events, maintain communications, and sense the battle. Despite the increased capability provided by the

C2 INFOSYS, command remains a personal endeavor. The commander should leverage the C2 INFOSYS to untether himself from the main CP so he can physically “see” his subordinates and the terrain he is to fight on without affecting his decision-making ability.

(2) The commander considers the following in determining his location on the battlefield:

- Linkage of the ABCS network to make timely decisions, including the ability to judge the progress, condition, and morale of his forces. Within technical limitations, communications systems adapt to the needs of the commander, not vice versa.
- Time and location of critical events and or decision points that have the greatest impact on mission accomplishment. Ideally, the commander selects a location where he can observe the conditions that aid in making a critical decision.
- Security for the command group, including the commander's personal protection.

b. **Tactical Command Post.** The tactical command post is a temporary C2 organization that directly assists the commander with controlling current operations. The S3 is responsible for the activities and employment of the TAC CP.

(1) The TAC CP organization is simpler, smaller, and more austere than the main CP. It operates as one integrated cell that provides intelligence, current operations, and effects. It is composed of those elements that the commander deems necessary. When not deployed, the TAC CP personnel assist operations in the main CP. Its small size and high mobility allow frequent displacement and a comparatively low electronic signature to maintain security. The TAC CP is normally manned with--

- The SBCT S3.
- A current operations officer, normally the assistant S3.
- An intelligence officer, normally the assistant S2.
- DECOORD/ALO.
- Other staff area representatives such as MANSPT and or ADAM, if directed by the S3 or SBCT commander.

(2) In addition to controlling current operations, the TAC CP serves the following functions:

- Provides the command group with combat information and intelligence.
- Relays the commander's decisions and instructions, as required.
- Provides the net control station for the SBCT command radio net and backup net control station for the operations and intelligence (OI) radio net.
- Provides a forward location for issuing orders.
- Provides a forward planning facility, if necessary.
- Serves as the main CP when the main CP is displacing or unable to function.
- Exercises command and control over special operations such as a passage of lines, relief in place, shift of the main effort, or construction of a strongpoint.
- Provides command and control for a special task force.

c. **Main Command Post.** The main CP has a broader and more capable current operations battle tracking capability than the TAC CP. The main CP has a greater ISR

planning and controlling capability, which allows it to process data received from the cavalry squadron (RSTA), the military intelligence company, and other ISR assets. The fires and effect coordination cell is also located at the main CP; this allows the ECOORD to monitor ongoing lethal and non-lethal effects and provide the commander with recommendations on the execution and assessment of the targeting process within the brigade AO. The main and rear CPs are able to maintain constant awareness of the other's actions through the SBCT C2 INFOSYS. The SBCT XO is responsible for supervising all staff activities and functions within the main CP. The main CP operates from a stationary position and moves as required to maintain control of the operation. In linear operations environments, it locates behind the infantry battalion CPs and, if possible, out of enemy medium artillery range. In nonlinear operations (noncontiguous areas of operations), it locates where it can best support SBCT operations and is least vulnerable to potential hostile actions. This may be within the AO or from "sanctuary" (a location outside the immediate AO). The main CP provides the following functions:

- Controls current operations when the TAC CP is not deployed.
- Assumes functions of the TAC CP if it is destroyed or incapable of functioning.
- Synchronizes combat, combat support, and combat service support activities in support of the overall operation.
- Provides a focal point for the development of intelligence.
- Supports SBCT and subordinate commander's decision-making by monitoring, analyzing, and disseminating information.
- Monitors and anticipates the commander's decision points.
- Coordinates with higher headquarters and adjacent units.
- Keeps the higher headquarters informed.
- Provides net control station for the OI radio net and backup net control station for the command radio net.
- Produces and disseminates the commander's FRAGOs for execution within the current 24 hour window.
- Controls reconnaissance and surveillance operations.

The cavalry squadron (RSTA) command posts (the TAC CP or command group) locate where they can synchronize reconnaissance and surveillance with ongoing operations. Possible options include the following:

- Collocate with the SBCT TAC CP when deployed as an early entry force.
- Locate in the AO to conduct reconnaissance operations while the main CP resides in "sanctuary."
- Locate in an assigned AO, especially during stability (or support) operations.
- Locate at a passage of lines to perform liaison and command and control.

d. **Rear Command Post.** The rear CP controls and coordinates the administrative and logistical support for the SBCT. The rear CP consists of the SBCT S1, S4, and any attached military police elements. The rear CP collocates with the BSB support operations section in the BSA. The SBCT S1 and S4 work closely with the BSB support operations officer to coordinate combat service support for the SBCT. The rear CP is under OPCON of the BSB commander for defense of the BSA. The rear CP serves the following functions:

- Tracks the current battle.
- Provides combat service support representation to the plans cell for planning and integration.
- Sustains operations.
- Forecasts and coordinates future requirements.
- Serves as the entry point for units entering the SBCT rear area.
- Monitors MSRs and controls combat service support traffic.
- Coordinates the evacuation of casualties, equipment, and EPWs.
- Coordinates the movement of the BSA with the main CP.

### **Section III. PLANNING FOR OPERATIONS**

Planning for operations leads to a commander making decisions during execution. At its core, decision-making is knowing "if" to decide, then "when" and "what" to decide. It includes understanding the consequence of decisions. Decisions are the means by which the commander translates his vision of the end state into action. Decision-making is both science and art. Many aspects of military operations--movement rates, fuel consumption, weapons effects--are quantifiable and, therefore, part of the *science* of war. Other aspects--the impact of leadership, complexity of operations, and uncertainty regarding enemy intentions--belong to the art of war. The MDMP is an established and proven analytical process. The MDMP adapts the Army's analytical approach to problem solving. It is a tool that assists the *commander* and staff in developing estimates and a plan. The digitization of our Army and its battlefield operating systems has not changed the steps of the MDMP; it has enhanced them. While the formal problem-solving process described in this chapter may start with the receipt of a mission, and has as its goal the production of an order, the analytical aspect of the MDMP is continuous during operations (including execution) with constant feedback and updates of information.

#### **2-9. INFORMATION SYSTEMS ENHANCEMENT TO DECISION-MAKING**

The C2 INFOSYS will enhance both the science and the art of war in two primary ways.

a. First, the INFOSYS will provide commanders and staffs with a better understanding of their battlespace. Information will be--

- Collected more effectively.
- Processed faster and more accurately.
- Stored in a manner that provides instant access through distributed databases.
- Displayed in a more useable, tailored, and current format.
- Disseminated to the right place faster, with fewer errors, and less lag time than analog systems.

The systems include the ability to access analytical expertise and databases of Army, national, and civilian institutions and the ability to create virtual staffs. Virtual staffing, the bringing together of organic and non-organic elements independent of locations in or out of the area of operation, can be used to develop and update the staff database and refine courses of action and the plan. The C2 INFOSYS and information management will make estimates more accurate, complete, and current than was possible with analog systems. Creating and maintaining a current, complete COP is essential to the MDMP and is the foundation for all estimates.

b. The second area where these systems improve the MDMP is in parallel and collaborative planning. Parallel planning occurs when two echelons conduct their planning nearly simultaneously. Parallel planning can only happen when the higher headquarters produces timely warning orders and shares information with subordinate headquarters as it becomes available. Parallel planning allows each echelon to make maximum use of time available, and it requires significant interaction between echelons. Collaborative planning (Paragraph 2-26, Coordination and Liaison) is the real-time interaction of commanders and staffs at two or more echelons. It is facilitated by C2 INFOSYS that allow real time exchange of data, voice, and video so that commanders and staffs can work together during all phases of planning.

(1) The INFOSYS facilitate both parallel and collaborative planning. These systems make sharing information much easier through a COP; distributed databases; increased speed and accuracy of dissemination of orders, plans, and guidance; and improved connectivity between echelons for the sharing of information and the passing of questions and answers with greater speed.

(2) Collaborative planning must be used judiciously. While it is a powerful planning tool, it can also be a negative factor. Collaborative planning is not appropriate for all situations.

(a) Collaborative planning is most appropriate when time is scarce and a limited number of options are being considered. It is particularly useful when the commander and his staff can benefit from the input of subordinate commanders and staffs.

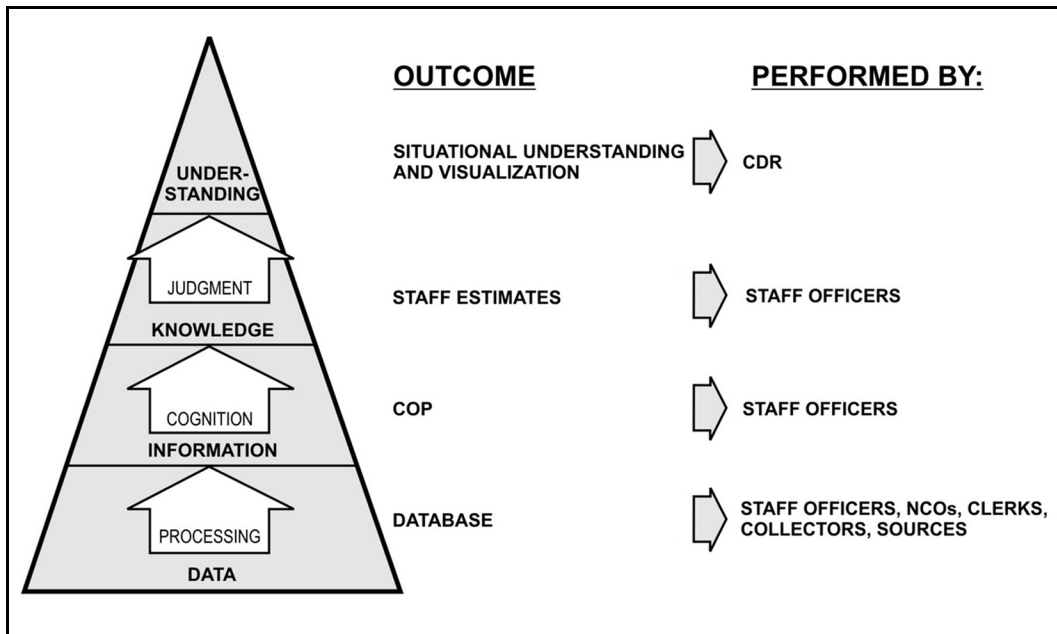
(b) Collaborative planning is not appropriate in cases where the staff is working a large number of courses of action or branches and sequels, many of which will be discarded. Involving subordinates in this instance will waste precious time working options that are later discarded. Collaborative planning is also not appropriate in many cases during ongoing operations where extended planning sessions will take commanders and staffs away from conducting current operations.

(c) As a rule of thumb, if the commander is directly involved in time sensitive planning, some level of collaborative planning is probably called for. The commander, not the staff, must make the decision to conduct collaborative planning. Only the commander can commit subordinate commanders to using their time for collaborative planning.

c. The INFOSYS will improve the time lines to conduct full planning and will assist the commander with his situational understanding. Figure 2-3, page 2-12, illustrates the cognitive hierarchy. The commander and staff must process the information available to them. Processing raises the meaning of information from data to understanding. The data is organized and processed to create the databases of information. Processing then takes the data in the database and adds meaning to the relevant information with progressively higher levels of complex and cognitive methods that create a common operational picture.

d. Processing also includes lower-level mechanical methods such as organizing, collating, plotting, and arranging data and information. However, effective processing requires analysis and evaluation (higher-level cognitive methods) for data to become knowledge. Through its estimates, the staff creates knowledge for the commander. The commander then applies his judgment to the staff estimates and COP and formulates his situational understanding. Processing depends primarily on well-trained and adaptive

analysts to provide insight. To achieve understanding, decision-makers apply judgment to the knowledge and the staff estimates. Understanding enables informed decisions with less-than-perfect data. Understanding generates action. With situational understanding and a mission, commanders can then visualize their battlespace and take action by issuing their commanders' guidance, intent, and selection of CCIR.



**Figure 2-3. Cognitive hierarchy.**

## 2-10. THE MILITARY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The MDMP is a detailed, deliberate, sequential, and time-consuming process used when adequate planning time and sufficient staff support are available to develop and thoroughly examine numerous friendly and enemy courses of action. This examination typically occurs when developing the commander's estimate and operation plans, when planning for an entirely new mission, and during extended operations. The underlying concurrent processes of IPB, risk assessment, targeting, force protection, and military deception planning provide the information that is used as part of the standardized planning in the MDMP. The MDMP helps the *commander* and staff to examine a specific situation and, by applying thoroughness, clarity, sound judgment, logic, and professional knowledge, reach a logical decision. The MDMP is the foundation on which planning in a time-constrained environment is based. The products created during the MDMP can and should be used during subsequent planning sessions when time may not be available for a thorough reexamination but where significant parts of existing information and analysis of the factors of METT-TC have not changed substantially. (See Section IV for a detailed explanation of the MDMP and the use of MDMP in a time-constrained environment.)

a. The MDMP relies on doctrine, especially the terms and symbols (graphics) consolidated in FM 101-5-1. The professional understanding of a defined common lexicon particular to the profession of arms and the Army are essential to the MDMP. Using approved terms and symbols facilitates the rapid and consistent assessment of the

situation and creation and implementation of plans and orders by minimizing confusion over the meanings of terms and symbols used in the process.

- b. Using the unabbreviated MDMP provides the following advantages:
  - It analyzes and compares multiple friendly and enemy COAs in an attempt to identify the best possible friendly COA.
  - It produces the greatest coordination and synchronization for an operation and minimizes the risk of overlooking a critical aspect of the operation.
  - It results in a detailed operation order or operation plan.
- c. The disadvantage of using the unabbreviated MDMP is that it is a time-consuming process.

## 2-11. ROLES OF THE COMMANDER AND EXECUTIVE OFFICER

*The commander is in charge of the military decision-making process.* He decides what procedures within the MDMP to use in each situation, including whether or not to use collaborative planning. The commander's intent is the driving force behind the MDMP. The planning process hinges on a clear articulation of his commander's visualization. The C2 INFOSYS provide the commander with an unprecedented level and quality of information that will help focus his attention on the critical elements of the situation and enable him to better understand the environment in which he is operating.

a. The commander is personally responsible for planning, preparing, and executing operations. *From start to finish, the commander's personal role is central: his participation in the process provides focus and guidance to the staff.* However, there are responsibilities and decisions that are the commander's alone. The amount of his direct involvement is driven by the time available, his personal preferences, and the experience and accessibility of the staff. The less time available, the less experienced the staff, and the less accessible the staff, the greater the commander's involvement. When the commander is linked with his staff by the C2 INFOSYS, he is more accessible and has more tools to provide guidance and to stay involved in the process, regardless of his location within the area of operation. (See Paragraph 2-20, Decision-Making in a Time-Constrained Environment, for a discussion of increased commander involvement in the decision-making process.)

b. The commander uses the entire staff during the MDMP to explore the full range of probable and likely enemy and friendly courses of action and to analyze and compare his own organization's capabilities with those of the enemy. This staff effort has one objective: to collectively integrate information with sound doctrine and technical competence to assist the commander in his decisions, leading ultimately to effective execution. Through the use of C2 INFOSYS, the commander guides not only the staff but subordinate commanders as well and uses the C2 INFOSYS to access additional data, from national or higher echelons, to help in analyzing both the environment in which he is operating and the enemy.

c. The XO manages, coordinates, and disciplines the staff's work and provides quality control. He must understand the commander's guidance and intent because he supervises the entire process. He ensures the staff has the information, guidance from the commander, and facilities it needs. He determines timelines for the staff, establishes briefback times and locations, enforces the information management plan, and provides any unique instructions to guide the staff to completing the MDMP process.

d. By issuing guidance and participating in formal and informal briefings, the commander and XO guide the staff through the decision-making process. In a collaborative environment, the commander can extend this participation directly to subordinate commanders and staffs. Warning orders are used to facilitate parallel planning. Such interaction helps the staff and subordinates to resolve questions and involves them in the complete process. The selected course of action and its implementing operation order are directly linked to how well both the commander and the staff accomplish each step of the MDMP.

## **2-12. THE ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE**

The SBCT commander deploys the cavalry squadron (RSTA) early in the planning process to facilitate early intelligence collection. However, the cavalry squadron (RSTA) should not be deployed without first considering, as a minimum, the reconnaissance and surveillance planning factors found during mission analysis (Paragraph 2-14).

a. The commander and staff analyze the information collected from the cavalry squadron (RSTA), MICO, and other ISR assets and incorporate this information into the planning process. The commander and staff ensure ISR operations are continuous while planning, preparing for, and executing the mission. Information collected during reconnaissance and surveillance may result in initial plans or courses of action being modified or even discarded. The earlier the need for modifications can be identified, the easier the modifications can be incorporated and synchronized into the plan. Further, when the plan changes, the commander must modify his reconnaissance and surveillance objective to support the new plan.

b. ISR operations assist significantly in developing courses of action. Conducted early in the planning process, it can help confirm or deny the commander's initial assessment (visualization). Information may also allow him to immediately focus on a specific course of action, or eliminate courses of action that the reconnaissance shows to be infeasible. When conducting ISR operations, the commander must determine if the benefits outweigh the risks.

## **Section IV. THE MILITARY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

The MDMP is a single, established, and proven analytical process. It is an adaptation of the Army's analytical approach to problem solving that assists the commander and his staff in describing the commander's visualization and expressing his directives in the form of an OPLAN or OPORD (Figure 2-4). The complete MDMP is described in FM 101-5. It is a seven-step process that is summarized in this section.





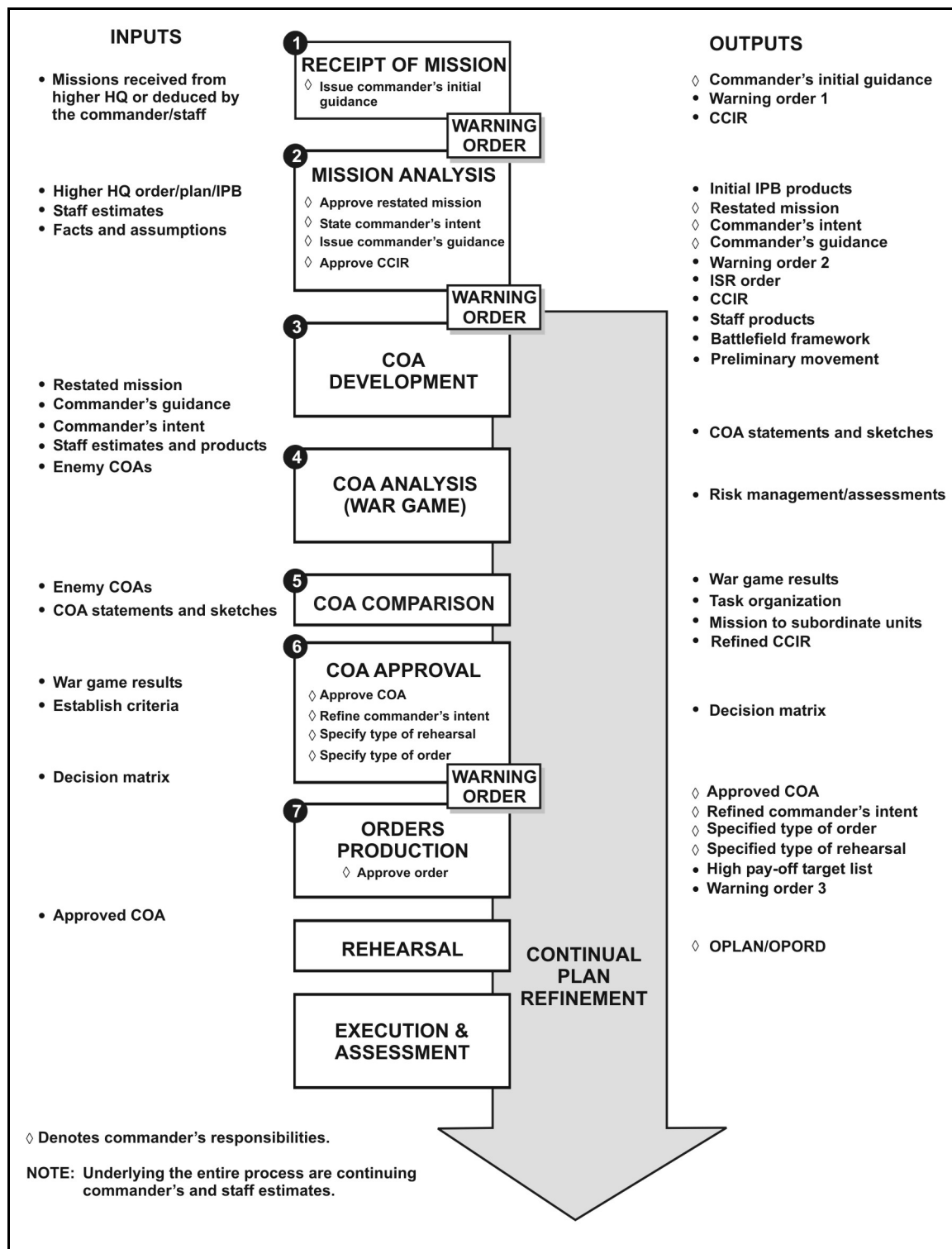


Figure 2-4. The steps in the MDMP.

## 2-13. RECEIPT OF MISSION

The staff receives a new mission in the form of an OPORD from a higher headquarters, or the commander recognizes an opportunity that requires a significant change to the current operation. The staff begins to collect the data and resources necessary to conduct mission analysis. The XO develops the timeline to structure the staff's efforts, and the commander issues initial guidance to his staff that focuses them on developing initial CCIR, authorized movement, level of detail required in the MDMP, and initial ISR requirements. The result of this step is a WARNO that alerts subordinate units to an impending mission change.

#### **2-14. MISSION ANALYSIS**

Mission analysis is crucial to the MDMP. It allows the commander to begin his commander's visualization (FM 6-0). Mission analysis consists of 17 tasks, not necessarily sequential, and results in the staff formally briefing the commander. Analysis of the higher headquarters mission is the start point that generates the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) as described in FM 2-91.3. The staff analyzes the specified, implied, and essentials task laid out in the higher headquarters' order. It reviews the available assets, and identifies critical facts and assumptions. The commander makes an initial assessment of where he might take tactical risk (FM 100-14). The commander and staff identify non-tactical risk hazards and make an initial assessment of the risk level for each hazard. (See Appendix C, Risk Management and Fratricide Avoidance, and Appendix D, Environmental Concerns and Compliance.) The results of mission analysis are the initial CCIR, an ISR plan, the SBCT's mission, the commander's initial intent for the operation, and the commander's guidance for the staff on developing COAs. These products are distributed to subordinates in the form of WARNO #2 and an ISR order.

#### **2-15. COURSE OF ACTION DEVELOPMENT**

The staff develops COAs for analysis and comparison. This begins with analyzing relative combat power and generating maneuver options. The staff arrays initial forces to accomplish critical tactical tasks and develops the scheme of maneuver that synchronizes the tasks using the battlefield framework. The final result is a COA statement and sketch that clearly portrays how the SBCT will accomplish the mission and explains the scheme of maneuver. The COA statement and sketch serve as the basis for the COA analysis war game.

#### **2-16. COURSE OF ACTION ANALYSIS (WAR GAME)**

The staff develops a set of standards used to evaluate each COA. The standards may be based on the principles of war, commander's guidance, doctrinal principles for the operation being conducted, or whatever measure is deemed important by the commander. The staff conducts a war game of each COA using an action, reaction, and counteraction methodology. This allows them to view the likely outcome of the battle, allocate resources, synchronize BOS, and develop control measures. The results of each war game are assessed using evaluation criteria established by the commander and recorded for comparison against other COAs.

#### **2-17. COURSE OF ACTION COMPARISON**

The staff evaluates each COA and the advantages and disadvantages of each COA to determine which COA best accomplishes the mission without undue risk. Each COA is briefed to the commander, and the staff makes its recommendation on the most preferred option.

## **2-18. COURSE OF ACTION APPROVAL**

The commander selects a COA, modifies it as required to better meet his intent, or rejects all of them and has the staff develop new ones. The commander then finalizes his intent and CCIR based on the chosen COA. He gives guidance to the staff on the type of order to produce, rehearsals to conduct, and priorities for CS and CSS assets. The staff issues WARNO #3 reflecting these changes.

## **2-19. ORDERS PRODUCTION**

The staff finalizes the plan based on the commander's approval guidance and prepares to publish a written order, brief an oral order, transmit a digital order, or a combination thereof. The order includes graphical overlays and staff annexes as appropriate.

## **2-20. DECISION MAKING IN A TIME-CONSTRAINED ENVIRONMENT**

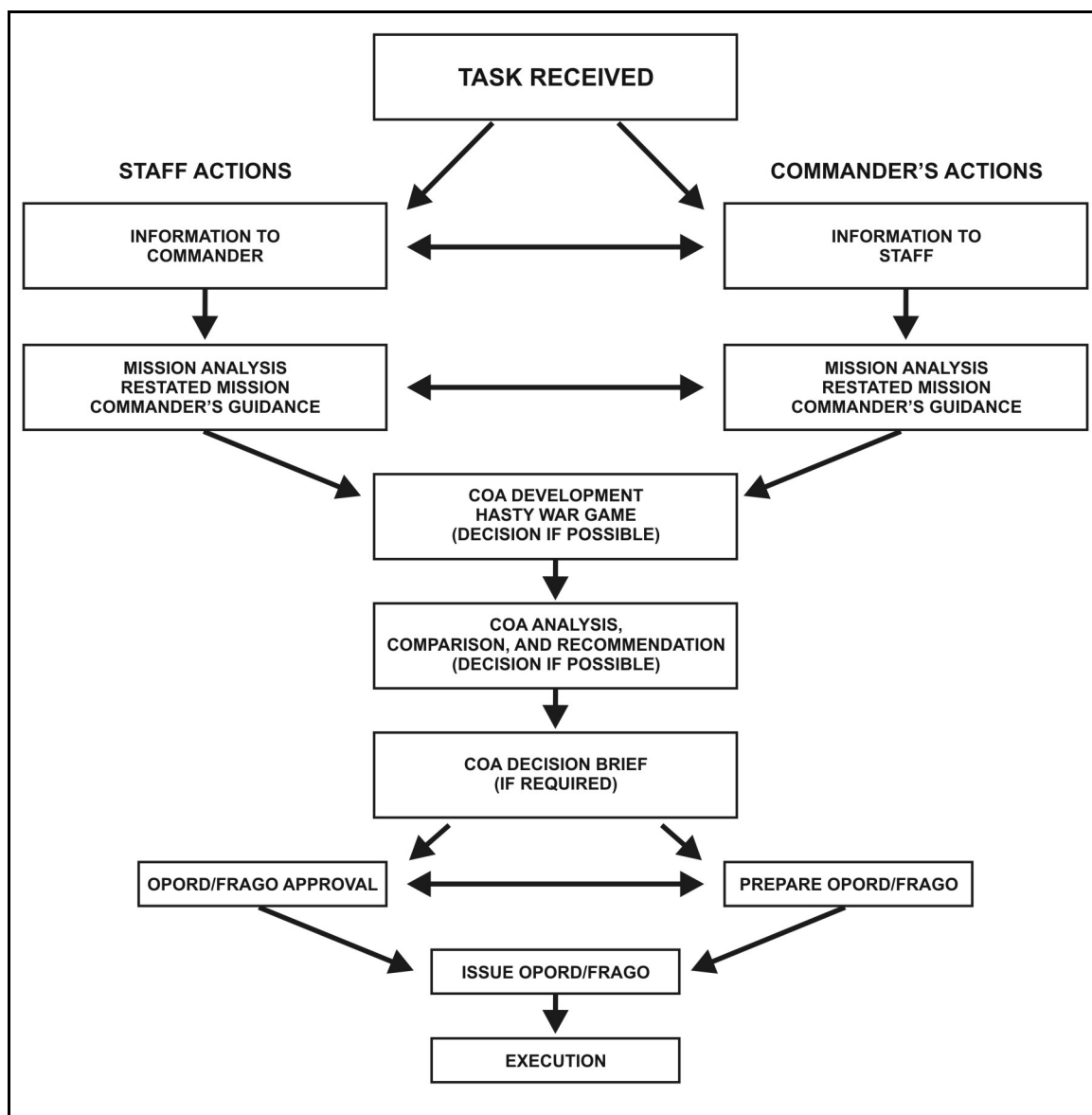
The MDMP is the foundation on which planning in a time-constrained environment is based. The products created during the MDMP can and should be used during subsequent planning sessions when time may not be available for a thorough reexamination but where significant parts of existing information and analysis of the factors of METT-TC have not changed substantially. The focus of any planning process should be to quickly develop a flexible, tactically sound, fully integrated, and fully synchronized plan that increases the likelihood of mission success with the fewest possible casualties. However, any operation may go beyond the initial plan. The most detailed staff estimates cannot anticipate every possible branch or sequel, enemy action, unexpected opportunities, or changes in mission directed from higher headquarters. Fleeting opportunities or unexpected enemy actions may require a quick decision to implement a new or modified plan.

Before a unit can conduct decision-making in a time-constrained environment, it must master all of the steps in the MDMP. A unit can only shorten the MDMP if it fully understands the role of each and every step of the process and the requirements to produce the necessary products. Training on these steps must be thorough and result in a series of staff battle drills that can be tailored to the time available. Training on the MDMP must be stressful and replicate realistic conditions and time lines. Although the task is difficult, all staffs must be able to produce a simple, flexible, tactically sound plan in a time-constrained environment. Any METT-TC factor, but especially limited time, may make it difficult to follow the entire MDMP. An inflexible process used in all situations will not work. The MDMP is a sound and proven process that can be modified with slightly different techniques to be effective when time is limited. There is still only one process, however, and omitting steps of the MDMP is not the solution. *Anticipation, organization, and prior preparation* are the keys to success in a time-constrained environment.

The commander decides how to abbreviate the MDMP. What follows are suggested techniques and procedures that will save time. They are not exhaustive nor the only ways

to save time, but they have proven useful. These techniques are not necessarily sequential in nature, nor are all of them useful in all situations. What works for a unit depends on its proficiency and the factors of METT-TC in a given situation. The commander can use these, or techniques of his own choosing, to abbreviate the process. Figure 2-5 is an example of an abbreviated MDMP outline.





**Figure 2-5. Example of an abbreviated MDMP outline.**

a. **General Considerations.** The MDMP is abbreviated when there is too little time for a thorough and comprehensive application of the process. The most significant factor to consider is time. It is the only nonrenewable, and often the most critical, resource.

(1) There are four primary techniques to save time.

(a) The first is to increase the SBCT commander's involvement, allowing him to make decisions during the process without waiting for detailed briefings after each step.

(b) The second technique is for the commander to become more prescriptive in his guidance by limiting options. This saves the staff time by focusing members on those things the commander feels are most important.

(c) The third technique, and the one that saves the most time, is for the commander to limit the number of courses of action developed and war-gamed. The goal is an

acceptable course of action that meets mission requirements in the time available, even if it is not optimal. He can also direct that the staff refine only one course if he has personally and mentally conducted the MDMP to come up with his acceptable course of action.

(d) The fourth technique is to maximize parallel planning. Although parallel planning is the norm during the MDMP, maximizing its use in a time-constrained environment is critical.

(2) In a time-constrained environment, the importance of warning orders increases as available time decreases. A verbal warning order now followed by a written order later (or posted to a database) is worth more than a written order one hour from now. The same warning orders used in the MDMP should be issued when abbreviating the process.

(3) In addition to warning orders, units must share all available information with subordinates, especially IPB products, as early as possible. The C2 INFOSYS greatly increase this sharing of information and the commander's visualization through collaboration with his subordinates.

(4) While the steps used in a time-constrained environment are the same, many of them may be done mentally by the SBCT commander or with less staff involvement than during the MDMP. The products developed when the process is abbreviated may be the same as those developed for the MDMP; however, they may be much less detailed and some may be omitted altogether. Unit SOPs tailor this process to the commander's preference for orders in this environment.

(5) When developing the plan, the staff may initially use the MDMP and develop branches and sequels. During execution, they may abbreviate the process. A unit may use the complete process to develop the plan while a subordinate headquarters abbreviates the process.

b. **The Commander's Role.** The SBCT commander decides what adjustments to make to the MDMP, giving specific guidance to the staff to focus the process and save time. If the commander has access to only a small portion of the staff or none at all, he will need to rely even more on his own expertise, intuition, creativity, and understanding of the environment and the art and science of warfare. He may have to decide on his course of action, mentally war-game the outcome, and confirm his decision to the staff all in a relatively short time. If so, his decision will be based more on his experience than on a formal integrated staff process. The commander may elect to have his staff spend most of its time developing, refining, and war-gaming his course of action rather than developing multiple courses of action.

(1) The commander should avoid changes to his guidance unless a significantly changed situation dictates major revisions. Frequent minor changes to the guidance can result in lost time as the staff makes constant minor adjustments to the plan.

(2) The commander should consult with subordinate commanders before making a decision, if possible. Subordinate commanders are closer to the fight and can more accurately portray the enemy's situation and that of their own unit. Additionally, consulting with subordinates will give them insight into the upcoming operation and allow them to maximize parallel planning. The use of the C2 INFOSYS greatly enhances this concept of maximizing parallel planning between the SBCT and the subordinate units.



(3) In situations where the SBCT commander must decide quickly, if time is available he should contact his higher headquarters and advise them of his selected course of action because it may affect the branches and sequels that his superiors are planning. However, the SBCT commander should not sacrifice exploiting an opportunity if he cannot contact higher headquarters.

c. **The Staff's Role.** The importance of staff estimates increases as time decreases. Decision-making in a time-constrained environment almost always takes place after a unit has entered into the area of operation and has begun to execute operations. This means that the IPB, an updated COP, and some portion of the staff estimates should already exist. Detailed planning before operations provides the basis for information that the commander will need to make decisions as operations continue. Staff members must keep their estimates up to date so that when planning time is limited they can provide accurate assessments quickly and move directly into course of action development. When time is short, the commander and staff use as much of the previously analyzed information and products from earlier decisions as possible. Although some of these products may change significantly, many (such as the IPB that is continuously updated) will remain the same or require little change.

(1) The staff must use every opportunity to maximize parallel planning with the unit's higher headquarters. Maximizing parallel planning can save significant time, but if not carefully managed, it can also waste time. As a general rule, the staff must never get ahead of the higher headquarters in the planning process. The majority of the planning time should be spent developing the foundation of the plan, such as mission analysis. The staff should not develop and analyze courses of action without specific guidance and approval from higher headquarters.

(2) Collaborative planning may be used to further speed up decision-making. Collaborative planning facilitates subordinate parallel planning and takes advantage of the subordinates' intimate knowledge of their area of operation and associated threats and opportunities. Collaborative planning among staffs is plausible; however, there will often be tension between taking a commander away from an ongoing fight and the need to involve him in collaborative planning. Only the SBCT commander can determine which takes precedence and require a subordinate commander to participate in a collaborative planning session.

d. **Receipt of Mission.** This part of the process does not change in a time-constrained environment. However, the commander decides at this step whether or not to abbreviate the MDMP and, if so, specifies how he wants to do it.

e. **Mission Analysis.** The commander's direct involvement is essential to saving time during mission analysis. He must personally supervise and manage the mission analysis. If time is not available to conduct a detailed mission analysis, the commander, his staff, and subordinate commanders (if collaborative tools are available) will rapidly perform mission analysis. In extreme circumstances, mission analysis may be a mental process conducted by the commander and key staff. *This should be the exception rather than the norm.*

(1) The IPB process requires constant attention. Many delays during mission analysis can be traced to poorly conducted IPB. The S2 must quickly update the IPB based on the new mission and changed situation. This is critical to focus the cavalry squadron (RSTA) and other ISR assets early to collect information that confirm adjustments to the initial

plan. Event templates must be as complete as possible prior to the mission analysis briefing. Because event templates are the basis for war gaming, they must be constantly updated as new information becomes available.

(2) Staff officers conduct as formal a mission analysis briefing as time allows. However, they may be forced to brief their estimates orally, covering only information that has changed from the last staff estimate, placing the remainder of the information on a shared database. When severely time-constrained, they brief only critical information that directly affects the new mission. If the commander has been directly involved in the mission analysis, he may decide to skip the mission analysis briefing completely.

f. **Commander's Guidance.** One way to save time is in the issuance of the commander's guidance. The elements of the commander's guidance may be the same as the MDMP, but the guidance is much more detailed and directive. The commander can provide detailed information outlining what he expects in each course of action developed, including tentative task organization, decision points, and scheme of maneuver. He may also determine which enemy courses of action he wants to war-game against as well as the branches or sequels he wants incorporated in each course of action. Detailed guidance keeps the staff focused by establishing parameters within which to work. Commander's guidance must be constantly reviewed and analyzed. As the situation changes and information becomes available, the commander may need to update or alter his guidance. This type of detailed guidance limits the staff's flexibility and initiative to save time, but it allows the staff more time to synchronize the course of action during the war gaming session. Once the guidance is issued, the staff immediately sends a WARNO to subordinate units. Alternatively, if subordinate commanders and staffs are part of a collaborative process, they will get this updated guidance during the collaborative session. However, the staff must still capture this guidance and publish it in a WARNO.

g. **Course of Action Development.** A significant amount of time is gained by increased commander involvement in course of action development, resulting in detailed and directive commander's guidance. The greatest savings in time for the MDMP comes from the commander directing the staff to develop only a few courses of action (or a single course of action) instead of many.

- The commander and selected staff (to include selected subordinate commanders and staffs, if collaborative tools are available) save additional time by conducting a hasty war game once the courses of action are developed.
- From the hasty war gaming session, the commander can make an early decision, allowing him to refine his course of action and make any necessary adjustments prior to the detailed war game.
- The hasty war game can also be used to select a single course of action for further development. It allows the staff to concentrate on synchronizing the course of action rather than on continuing to develop it during the detailed war gaming session.
- When time is severely limited, the quickest process comes from the commander personally deciding to immediately begin developing one COA, with branch plans against the enemy's most probable course of action.

- The commander determines which staff officers are critical to assist him in this process, depending on the type of operation being planned. As a minimum, he normally includes the XO, S3, S2, and ECOORD.
- Limiting the number of COAs is a risky approach and provides the staff with little flexibility to apply its creativity and to explore options.

h. **Course of Action Analysis.** The commander and staff must war-game the courses of action to ensure all elements are fully integrated and synchronized. An early decision to limit the number of courses of action to be war-gamed, or to develop only one course of action, saves the greatest amount of time in this process. When war-gaming the courses of action, it is best to do so against all feasible enemy courses of action. At a minimum, the actions at the decisive point must be war-gamed against the enemy's most probable course of action. The commander's direct involvement saves significant time in this step by allowing the staff to focus on only the most essential aspects of the war game.

- The commander can supervise the war gaming session and be prepared to make decisions, provide guidance, delete unsatisfactory concepts, and assist in keeping the staff focused.
- The commander must always assess risk. He must evaluate the course of action to ensure it will not render the force incapable of anticipated operations or lower the unit's combat effectiveness beyond acceptable levels.
- The commander and staff must identify and prioritize the critical events they want analyzed. Analyzing essential tasks can identify these critical events.
- Staff officers save time if they specifically define and limit the evaluation criteria before they begin the war gaming session.
- The commander can greatly increase effectiveness by specifying the most critical factors to his selected course of action and their weighting.
- The staff works to support the commander's plan. If the staff determines that it cannot support the commander's plan, a new course of action must be developed.
- The use of recorders is particularly important. The INFOSYS greatly simplify this process as information can be entered in preformatted forms in shared databases that represent either briefing charts or actual appendices to orders.
- The location used for the war gaming session must be prepared and configured by the time the staff is ready to conduct the war gaming session.
- Automated briefing products must be updated, digital terrain maps for the area of operation loaded in the appropriate INFOSYS, and automated tools for war-gaming must have correct data entered.
- When only one course of action is developed, the purpose of the course of action analysis is to verify, refine, synchronize, and integrate the commander's course of action and recommend modifications as necessary.

In a severely time-constrained environment, and if digital tools allow, units may combine the war gaming process with the rehearsal in a virtual environment, including both the command and staff and subordinate commanders and staffs.

i. **Course of Action Comparison.** If the commander decides to war-game only one course of action, or if he chooses one during the war gaming session, no course of action comparison is needed. If multiple courses of action have been war-gamed and the commander has not made a decision, the staff must conduct the course of action

comparison. Limiting the evaluation criteria and weighting factors is the only significant shortcut in this step.

j. **Course of Action Approval.** If the commander has observed and participated in the planning process, the decision may be rapidly apparent and the commander can make an on-the-spot decision. If the commander has not participated in the process to this point, or has not made a decision, a decision briefing is required. Good course of action comparison charts and sketches assist the commander in visualizing and distinguishing between each course of action. The staff must ensure the courses of action meet the course of action criterion, *Complete*. Time can also be saved by limiting the course of action briefing to only the decisive action and or selected critical points. If only one course of action was developed, no decision is required unless the developed course of action becomes unsuitable, infeasible, or unacceptable, in which event another course of action must be developed.

k. **Orders Production.** In a time-constrained environment, time is important and a verbal FRAGO may be issued first versus a written order. However, the staff must capture all the information in any verbal orders and warning orders and post a written order in a shared database to follow up on any previously issued orders. Once the decision is made not to issue a verbal order, the staff immediately sends out a WARNO.

## **Section V. PREPARING FOR OPERATIONS**

The SBCT's preparation activities improve its ability to successfully conduct contemplated operations. At a minimum, these activities include: plan refinement, rehearsals, reconnaissance and surveillance, coordination, inspections, and movement. Preparation occurs anytime the SBCT is not executing. Ideally, preparation begins with the receipt of an order (as does planning) and ends as execution begins. Assessment during preparation monitors the progress of readiness to conduct operations. The commander evaluates preparations against his criteria for success to determine variances and to forecast the significance of those variances for mission accomplishment.

### **2-21. INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE**

Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance integration is fundamental to information superiority. Effective ISR synchronization and coordination eliminates unit and functional collection efforts that are conducted in isolation and which prevent the collective sharing and processing of information and intelligence.

- Intelligence is the product resulting from the collection, processing, integration, analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of available information concerning foreign countries or areas and information and knowledge about an adversary obtained through observation, investigation, analysis, or understanding.
- Surveillance involves continuously observing an area to collect information. Wide-area and focused surveillance provide valuable information.
- Reconnaissance assets collect information and can validate current intelligence or predictions. Reconnaissance units, unlike other units, are designed to collect information.

During preparation, the SBCT commander answers his CCIR and improves his knowledge about the enemy and terrain through the cavalry squadron (RSTA) and other

ISR assets that may be available to him. An ISR operation is planned and executed with the same level of importance as any operation. Reconnaissance and surveillance is not a static, one-time effort that achieves a single goal and then ends. As the cavalry squadron (RSTA) and other ISR assets gather information (answering the CCIR), the staff should modify the collection plan to account for new information requirements and to redirect efforts to collect additional information. The commander and staff must continuously review intelligence products against the current situation; they redirect the cavalry squadron (RSTA) or other ISR assets to focus on the most important unknowns remaining, emphasizing the current CCIR. The SBCT commander must balance his need for information with the ability of the cavalry squadron (RSTA) to gather it, the risk to the cavalry squadron (RSTA) during collection, the ability to sustain the cavalry squadron (RSTA) over time and distance, the requirement to have the cavalry squadron (RSTA) available at critical times and places to support the decisive action, and the availability (time, type, and quantity) of other ISR assets. (See Chapter 3, ISR Operations.)

## **2-22. SECURITY**

Security measures taken during preparation prevent surprise and reduce uncertainty through local security and OPSEC. Local security and OPSEC prevent the enemy from discovering the SBCT's plan and protect the force from unforeseen enemy actions. The goal in conducting security operations is to prevent the enemy from gathering EEFI. Security operations are a dynamic effort that anticipates and prevents enemy intelligence-gathering efforts.

## **2-23. FORCE PROTECTION**

Force protection includes air and missile defense; nuclear, biological, and chemical defense; antiterrorism; defensive information operations; and security to operational forces and means. Unable to challenge the Army in conventional combat, adversaries seek to frustrate Army operations by resorting to asymmetric means, weapons, or tactics. Force protection counters these threats. The SBCT uses skillful and aggressive counterintelligence and threat assessments to decrease the vulnerability of friendly forces. Dispersion during movement helps reduce losses from enemy fires and asymmetric actors. Camouflage discipline, local security, and field fortifications do the same. Protection of electronic links and nodes is vital to protecting information, information systems, and soldiers. The commander and staff develop and initiate actions during planning but conduct the actions during preparation and execution.

## **2-24. REVISE AND REFINE THE PLAN**

The SBCT commander adjusts plans based on new information. The enemy is also acting while the SBCT is preparing for an upcoming operation. As assumptions prove true or false, as the cavalry squadron (RSTA) (or other ISR assets) confirm or deny enemy actions and dispositions, and as the status of subordinate units change, the SBCT commander determines whether the new information invalidates the plan, requires him to adjust the plan, or validates his plan.

## **2-25. COORDINATION AND LIAISON**

During preparation, the SBCT conducts necessary coordination with higher, lower, adjacent, and supporting units. This may include sending and receiving liaison teams. Coordination includes the establishment of all communication links to guarantee continuous contact during execution. This is especially critical when the SBCT is a subordinate element of an organization that lacks the C2 INFOSYS and when units who lack the same INFOSYS are subordinated to the SBCT. Coordination is essential for synchronization during execution.

a. **Coordination.** Exchanging information is critical to successful coordination. Coordination may be both internal and external. Internal coordination occurs within the SBCT staff. External coordination involves subordinate and supporting units and or staffs and higher headquarters. External coordination is sometimes referred to as "collaborative planning." Coordination has four objectives.

(1) It ensures an understanding of the commander's intent and an understanding of subordinate and supporting unit roles.

(2) It ensures that all affected and interested personnel have been consulted or informed so they may respond as desired or adjust their plans and actions.

(3) It avoids conflict and duplication of effort among subordinate units, reducing the risk of fratricide and the expenditure of resources.

(4) It ensures that the commander and staff consider all relevant factors and effectively employ all available assets.

b. **Liaison.** Liaison provides a means of direct communications between headquarters. Liaison may begin with planning and continue throughout preparation and execution.

## **2-26. REHEARSALS**

The intent of a rehearsal is to practice actions to improve performance during execution. The extent of rehearsals depends on the time available. Rehearsals allow participants to become familiar with the plan and to translate the plan into a visual impression that orients them to the environment and other units when executing. Rehearsals imprint a mental picture of the sequence of key actions within the upcoming operation. Rehearsals also provide a forum for subordinate and supporting leaders to coordinate. Rehearsals emphasize times, locations, and solutions for coordinating actions to achieve synchronization at critical points during execution.

## **Section VI. EXECUTION**

Execution is putting a plan into action by applying combat power to accomplish the mission using INFOSYS to assess progress and make decisions. Inherent in the dynamic nature of execution is deciding to execute planned actions as well as deciding to adjust the plan based on changes in the situation. Combining the art of command and the science of control is most evident during execution. The commander exercises judgment and initiative continuously, assessing the situation and making decisions, often with incomplete, conflicting, and vague information. During execution, the commander uses his visualization, continuously updated with a current COP, to assess the progress of operations. His CCIR, continuously updated during the operation, guides his information updates. Decision-making during execution follows an "assess, decide, and direct" model, with the MDMP at its core.

**2-27. THE COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM DURING EXECUTION**

During execution, the command and control system (Paragraph 2-5) must continuously manage RI. It must compare the COP against the commander's intent, identify variances from the plan, and recommend solutions for the commander to decide, correct, or exploit the variances. Finally, the command and control system must direct actions to execute decisions to counter unforeseen enemy or friendly actions or to exploit opportunities.

**2-28. ADAPTING TO CHANGES**

The SBCT uses one of two methods to adapt to changes. The first method begins during planning and consists of anticipating changes and developing branches and sequels to the plan to deal with them. Anticipating changes does not end with planning; it continues throughout preparation and execution. The second method of adapting to changes is improvising, taking action, or adopting solutions to unforeseen changes during the operation. While improvisation is not the preferred method, situations frequently arise requiring its use. The real difference between the two methods is time. Anticipation occurs when the enemy actions are foreseen early enough to develop an analytical response. Improvisation occurs when the enemy action is unexpected and does not allow time for formal planning of a response.

**2-29. ASSESSMENT**

Assessing an operation during execution is an essential and continuing task. It is a deliberate comparison of forecast outcomes to actual events, using the commander's criteria for success to judge operational success at any point during the operation. The commander and staff assess the probable outcomes of the ongoing operation to determine whether changes are required to accomplish the mission, to react to unforeseen threats, or to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities. The commander uses SU to assess the ongoing operation rather than to decide among various courses of action to determine if the current plan is (or is not) still valid.

a. **Monitoring the Operation.** The commander and staff monitor the ongoing operation to determine if it is progressing satisfactorily according to the current plan (including any FRAGO that may have modified it). The staff monitors the various facts and assumptions that were the basis of the plan to ensure these remain valid or to see if there is a need for new facts and assumptions that might affect current and future operations. Monitoring uses RI to develop a clear understanding of the SBCT's current state in relation to the enemy and the environment. The staff processes this RI and presents it to the commander as a clear operational picture.

b. **Evaluating the Criteria for Success.** The commander and staff continue to evaluate the commander's criteria for success during execution. The staff must continuously update its estimates and its source of assessment to supplement and support the commander's visualization. Assessing success results in two outcomes.

(1) The operation is progressing satisfactorily and observed variances between expectations and the current situation are minor or within acceptable levels. Progress meets the commander's intent and the concept of operations is still relevant to the situation. The result is that the operation continues as planned and leads to decisions foreseen by the plan.

(2) The operation as a whole is not proceeding according to expectations. The observed variances endanger the success of the operation. This assessment can result from unforeseen enemy successes or friendly failures, and it also can result if performance of critical indicators is much better than expected, presenting a significant opportunity to the SBCT. The commander makes a decision to eliminate the threat or to take advantage of the unforeseen opportunity.

## **2-30. DECISIONS**

The SBCT commander should not hesitate to modify his plan if it is necessary to save the force, to accomplish the mission, or to achieve greater success. Adhering to a plan when the situation has changed might waste resources and opportunities. The flexibility to adapt to changing situations is the hallmark of a good commander. The SBCT must train to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities and to leverage the C2 INFOSYS to disseminate decisions quickly. Deciding during execution consists of two basic types of decisions: execution decisions and adjustment decisions.

a. **Execution Decisions.** These decisions implement anticipated actions and are directed by the order. The most basic form of this type of decision is applying combat power or conducting activities as outlined within the plan, or within the commander's intent. Executing branches and sequels are execution decisions.

(1) **Critical Routine Functions.** The SBCT must accomplish routine tasks during execution. Although these tasks occur routinely, the commander must consciously consider them during execution. Failure to consider these routine tasks can waste resources, squander opportunities, or lead to mission failure.

(a) *Conduct Continuous ISR Operations.* ISR operations are a continuous process that feed the commander information to assist his decision-making. The SBCT commander should never keep the cavalry squadron (RSTA) and other ISR assets in reserve. During execution, these assets should be focused on answering the commander's CCIR and looking for opportunities for the SBCT to exploit.

(b) *Adjust IR and CCIR Based on the Situation.* The commander and staff must continue to review the CCIR during execution. The staff continues to analyze IR against the mission and updated commander's intent to identify those indicators that may directly affect the commander's decision-making. As CCIR are answered or the situation changes, the commander must develop new CCIR. The staff must disseminate these new CCIR to subordinate and supporting units. The staff must develop a new collection plan and allocate assets (cavalry squadron [RSTA] or other ISR assets) to answer the commander's new CCIR.

(c) *Track the Battle.* Battle tracking monitors designated elements of the COP that are tied to the commander's criteria for success. Battle tracking requires special attention on the part of all staff officers. The XO and S3 must continue to monitor the progress of movement and recommend changes as required.

(d) *Refine the Targeting Process.* The commander's decisions provide the basis for targeting decisions made in support of the continuing operation (execution). The commander remains alert to situations when he must give or modify targeting guidance to the staff. His guidance will synchronize the targeting process to continue achieving effects (lethal and or non-lethal) on the enemy.



(e) *Manage the Movement and Positioning of Combat Support and Combat Service Support Units.* Massing the effects of combat power at a decisive point requires not just the maneuver of combat forces but also the movement of combat support and combat service support forces. Using combat support and combat service support forces to shape must not interfere with the movement of combat forces to the decisive point. In the heat of executing a mission, it is easy to lose sight of the time required to reposition combat support and combat service support forces. The commander and staff must ensure that the movement of combat units does not outpace the movement of combat support and combat service support units. The commander's visualization should include the time required to move all of the SBCT assets to get to the right place at the right time.

(f) *Continue Terrain Management.* The SBCT must carefully track the location and land utilization of all units within the area of operations. Deconflicting land use among units in the SBCT's area of operations is difficult but necessary during execution. The staff must ensure that adequate space, including the use of routes, is available at the right time to support critical activities. The commander's visualization should determine what space is required for what force at what time to support the decisive action.

(2) *Planned Actions.* The commander or staff must recognize that a particular event or action directed by the OPORD has met preconditions (events or triggers) for execution and direct the execution of this planned action. Modifying planned actions to fit the current situation is still considered a planned action. Branches and sequels to an order (or plan) are planned actions.

b. **Adjustment Decisions.** Adjustment decisions modify the plan to respond to unanticipated threats or opportunities. Typically, a commander's adjustment decision requires further synchronization across the BOS. The commander describes his visualization of the adjustment through additional guidance. He must pay particular attention to the effects of adjustment decisions on targeting and give sufficient guidance to support the targeting process. Adjustments take one of three forms: reallocation of resources, changing the concept, and changing the mission.

(1) *Reallocation of Resources.* The simplest adjustment is to reallocate resources. The commander can allocate additional combat support or reinforce a combat unit with additional combat forces. The commander should reinforce success if it creates the opportunity for more success.

(2) *Changing the Concept.* Changing the concept of the operation adjusts the way in which the operation is conducted without changing the mission. Most often, this modifies the decisive action to exploit an unforeseen opportunity or to counter an unexpected threat. The commander's most important adjustment decision is the commitment of the reserve. Employing the reserve successfully requires anticipation and visualization. These allow the commander to task-organize, position, and move the reserve force in a manner that minimizes any loss of momentum with its commitment.

(3) *Changing the Mission.* The commander may opt to change his mission if, during execution, he sees that he cannot resolve a problem to accomplish his mission by reallocating resources or changing the concept. He should only do this as a last resort, and the change to the mission must still accomplish the higher commander's intent. Synchronizing the SBCT's new actions is the greatest problem this type of decision presents.

(4) **Adjustment Decision Methods.** When making adjustments to a unique or complex situation, and if time is available, the MDMP is preferred. When there is not sufficient time for the MDMP or during fast-paced combat operations, decision-making may become more intuitive for the commander. Intuitive (or recognition) decision-making emphasizes the commander's knowledge, judgment, experience, education, intellect, boldness, perception, and character.

(a) *Using the MDMP.* The commander may opt to use an abbreviated MDMP, focusing the staff on one course of action. This method also uses intuitive decision-making. It begins with the commander using his current SU to visualize and mentally formulate a single course of action that solves the unforeseen problem. He directs the staff to analyze and refine the COA. The commander resolves any inadequacies the staff detects through its analysis by revising or modifying the given course of action rather than developing a new one.

(b) *Recognition Decisions.* This type of decision-making requires the greatest involvement of the commander and the least involvement from the staff. It relies on the commander's experience in the use of intuitive decision-making to be successful. The commander visualizes the solution to a problem immediately, with little or no analysis of alternatives or outcomes necessary. Recognition decisions do not necessarily follow the MDMP; however, the commander's decisions are well grounded in an understanding of the enemy and terrain, the updated commander's estimate and staff estimates, and the OPORD that began the operation. This approach focuses on SU, assessing significant variances, and selecting and or refining an acceptable decision mentally instead of comparing multiple options to select the optimal answer.

## **2-31. DIRECTING ACTION**

Any decision to change a plan requires a change in the application of combat power and a resynchronization to mass effect on the enemy. The SBCT commander must direct action that applies combat power to effect execution or adjustment decisions. The FRAGO is the normal means to direct changes during execution. The C2 INFOSYS give the command and control system the capability to automate orders (and graphics) production and dissemination, especially for execution decisions that use data and information stored on a shared database.

a. **Synchronize Operations.** After the SBCT commander makes a decision during execution, his staff must resynchronize the ongoing operation to maximize the application of combat power against the enemy. This resynchronization includes informing subordinates, integrating assets, incorporating the decision into the targeting process, and deconflicting subordinate actions. The staff uses the INFOSYS to reduce duplication, confusion, and problems that may occur from the change. Resynchronization should be used only to the extent required to ensure mission accomplishment. Excessive synchronization may waste valuable resources and opportunities.

b. **Maintain Continuity.** Continuity (fewest changes) allows for a greater chance of successful execution. Continuity does not inhibit flexibility; the SBCT commander and his staff should only make changes to current operations necessary to solve a problem. Maintaining the current plan as much as possible allows subordinates to focus on only a few discrete changes. The commander and staff should avoid changes that may preclude options for future operations.